



United States
Environmental
Protection Agency
Washington, D.C. 20460

Solid Waste
and Emergency
Response (5101)

EPA 500-F-99-xxx
September 1999



Ecology in Partnership with Industry

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Brownfields Success Stories

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

Cape Charles, Virginia, a small, picturesque town on the southern tip of Virginia's Eastern Shore, is a model for how ecology works in tandem with industry, enabling both to thrive. Created by Northampton County and the Town of Cape Charles, the Sustainable Technology Park Authority has worked hard to incorporate natural habitat protection into overall plans for the Sustainable Technology Park. This work paid off with a \$200,000 U.S. EPA Brownfields Assessment Pilot award in September 1995, adding to a growing commitment of private, state, and federal funding that reaches nearly \$8 million. The project is successfully blending environmental protection and thriving businesses to create an eco-industrial park in the heart of Cape Charles, where 27 percent of the town's 13,000 residents live below the poverty level.

The Cape Charles Sustainable Technology Park is only one piece of a county-wide, six-tier strategic plan called the Northampton County Sustainable Development Action Strategy. This plan was created through a cooperative effort between community officials and the public, following the

county's designation as a rural Enterprise Community (EC) from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In August 1994, the President's Council on Sustainable Development selected Cape Charles as one of four sites for a national eco-industrial park



The abandoned dump and railyard site

demonstration project, to showcase advanced facilities in resource efficiency and pollution prevention. Community-wide interactive workshops held in February 1995 began the design and development process for the eco-industrial park.

Included in the millions of dollars from various public and private sources that have since been spent or earmarked to help redevelop the eco-park is a \$790,000, Rural Business Enterprise grant from the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration, which is funding infrastructure improvements at the park.

At the heart of the 200-acre eco-park is an abandoned 25-acre town dump. \$70,000 of the \$200,000 Brownfields Assessment Pilot grant funded an environmental assessment of this site, and mitigation plans are now underway that will facilitate its eventual redevelopment. "This [EPA] funding," says Tim Hayes, Executive Director of the Sustainable Technology Park Authority, "is vital to the success of the entire project because access to the Park is contingent on redeveloping this brownfield." The Sustainable Technology Park Authority plans to use this site, along with some adjacent land, as a conference and training facility for the park.

Construction of the Park's first building was completed in March 1999. The Park Authority will lease the 31,000-square-foot building to Energy Recovery, a manufacturing, research and development firm that plans to hire 50 local residents. A \$2.5 million county bond paid for construction of the building, which will open in the summer of 1999. Another future tenant of the Park, Solar Building Systems, Inc., converted the town's former elementary school into a temporary factory while it waits for its new facility to become available. The company has already hired 30 local residents to assemble solar panels. Many of these workers had been laid off from a local crab processing plant, where they developed a manual dexterity that served them well in their new jobs.

Approximately one-half of the land in the park is

"[EPA Pilot] funding is vital to the success of the entire project, because access to the Park is contingent on redeveloping this brownfield."

*—Tim Hayes, Executive Director,
Sustainable Technology Park
Authority*

natural habitat, including the 30-acre Coastal Dune Natural Area Preserve and approximately 60 acres of other natural areas. The entire park is open to the public, and construction of walkways and trails—including a Chesapeake Bay overlook—is expected to be complete in the spring of 1999. This project has created two permanent, full-time construction and maintenance jobs, and one temporary job with the Park Authority.

In addition to the Department of Agriculture's Rural Business Enterprise grant, federal agency involvement has also contributed to the larger scope of the Northampton County Sustainable Development Action Strategy. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration funded the Action Strategy, and helped with planning and design of the park and the Energy Recovery building. The U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife funded the park's Natural Area Preserve, as it has provided for other natural preserves within Northampton County. And in 1998, EPA awarded the Cape Charles Pilot an additional \$200,000 as a finalist in the interagency Showcase Communities program.



Artist's rendering of the future eco-industrial park

The Cape Charles/Northampton County, Virginia Pilot has been successful in combining the efforts of both the government and the community, and is a refreshing reminder that industry and the environment can co-exist and prosper. Development of the park is giving innovative companies the opportunity to establish themselves in Cape Charles, and building a workforce from local talent. For more information on Cape Charles' Brownfields Pilot, contact Josie Matsinger at (215) 566-3132.

JUST THE FACTS

- In August 1994, the President's Council on Sustainable Development selected Cape Charles as one of four sites for a national eco-industrial park demonstration project.
- \$70,000 of the \$200,000 Brownfields grant funded an environmental assessment of a 25-acre, abandoned dump at the heart of the 200-acre eco-industrial park.
- Construction of the Park's first building was completed in March 1999. The Park Authority will lease the building to a manufacturing, research and development firm that plans to hire 50 local residents.

Contacts:

Town of Cape Charles /
County of Northampton
(757) 678-0477

U.S. EPA - Region 3
(215) 566-3129

Visit the EPA Brownfields Website at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>